

Gillette, Liz

From: Melissa Marshall <melissa.marshall@snet.net>
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 8:14 PM
To: AppTestimony
Subject: testimony Chris Blake

I am Chris Blake. I live in East Haven. I am an advocate and a person with a disability. Please don't cut the Office of Protection and Advocacy's budget. They are already on a shoe string.

I wish I was able to be there in person. If people with disabilities had transportation we would get there.

The people that work at Protection and Advocacy have a relative or a friend or work experience with disability or mental illness as compared to other organizations. Other organizations don't have that good a track record of properly representing the community of people with disabilities. Other organizations don't know how to represent us correctly. They are one of the resources and tools to make sure that our civil rights are not violated or refused and we are not abused or neglected.

People with disabilities don't have the resources that other people have and P&A helps you file litigation and gives you the information that you need.

The Department of Justice doesn't have a good track record. Sometimes times around guardianship they try to represent both you and the parent or both you and the state Protection and Advocacy doesn't do that.

Protection and Advocacy helped me work with BRS. They were a mediator. There are few other places that you can just give you the information and walk you through and hold your hand and get rid of that panicked feeling. They walk you through what you will when you first apply for Social Security or DDS. They explain what you need to know well. If you are on it and you are in trouble, if you have services and you think that you made a mistake with rules or policies they will help you solve the mistake that you made. .

I appreciate you reading this testimony. Thank you for your time.